

ABCs of Good Health Fact Sheets

Be Physically Active each day.

Health Benefits of Regular Physical Activity

- Increases physical fitness
- Helps build and maintain healthy bones, muscles, and joints
- Builds endurance and muscular strength
- Helps manage weight
- Lowers risk factors for cardiovascular disease, colon cancer, and type 2 diabetes
- Helps control blood pressure
- Promotes psychological well-being and self-esteem
- Reduces feelings of depression and anxiety

Aim to accumulate at least 30 minutes for adults or 60 minutes for children of moderate physical activity most days of the week, preferably daily.

Do you have a hard time finding 30 minutes a day for physical activity?

1. Remember that you don't need to do 30 minutes of activity at one time. Instead, plan to fit in your physical activity in 10-minute blocks of time throughout the day.
2. When you plan your next date or outing, incorporate activities such as bowling, tennis, racquetball, roller blading, ice skating, bike riding or walking in the park.
3. Build physical activity into your daily routine, by parking a distance from work to allow yourself some walking time, using the stairs instead of the elevator, walking to the post office, church or the store for lighter trips.
4. Remember that work around the house is often physical: vacuuming, mowing the lawn, raking, walking the dog, washing the car or cleaning the basement or garage.
5. Join a team such as a bowling league or volleyball team.
6. Do two things at once. For example work out on a rowing machine or a stair climber, while watching TV or talking on the phone. Have a short business meeting while walking around the block.
7. Take a ten-minute walk during your lunch or rest breaks.

Dietary Guidelines 2000

The **ABC's** of good health

Aim for fitness

- Aim for a healthy weight.
- Be physically active each day.

Build a healthy base

- Let the Pyramid guide your food choices.
- Choose a variety of grains daily, especially whole grains.
- Choose a variety of fruits and vegetables daily.
- Keep food safe to eat.

Choose sensibly

- Choose a diet that is low in saturated fat and cholesterol and moderate in total fat.
- Choose beverages and foods to moderate your intake of sugars.
- Choose and prepare foods with less salt.
- (for adults) If you drink alcoholic beverages, do so in moderation.

Compared with being very sedentary, being physically active for at least 30 minutes on most days of the week reduces the risk of developing or dying of heart disease. No one is too young or too old to enjoy the benefits of regular physical activity.

Two types of physical activity are especially beneficial:

- **Aerobic Activities.** These are activities that speed your heart rate and breathing. They help cardiovascular fitness.
- **Activities for strength and flexibility.** Developing strength may help build and maintain your bones. Carrying groceries and lifting weights are two strength-building activities. Gentle stretching, dancing, or yoga can increase flexibility.

Physical Activity and Nutrition

Physical activity and nutrition work together to:

- Help manage your weight.
- Increase the calories you use which allows you to eat more, making it easier to get the nutrients you need.
- Help maintain bone health. Calcium and other nutrients are needed to build and maintain strong bones, but physical activity is required as well.

Helping children Be physically active

Children and adolescents need at least 60 minutes of physical activity daily. Parents and other significant adults can help by:

1. Setting a good example. Arrange activity family events in which everyone takes part. Join your children in physical activities.
2. Encourage your children to be physically active at home, at school, and with friends by jumping rope, playing tag, riding a bike or scooter.
3. Limit television watching, computer games, and other inactive forms of play by alternating with periods of physical activity.

Examples of physical activities for children and teens:

- Be spontaneously active.
- Play tag.
- Jump rope.
- Ride a bicycle, tricycle or scooter.
- Walk, wheel, skip or run.
- Play actively during school recess.
- Roller skate or in-line skate.
- Take part in physical education activity classes during school.
- Join after-school or community physical activity programs.
- Dance.

Watermelon Blueberry Banana Split

Preparation Time: 10 Minutes

Makes: 4 Servings

- 2 large bananas
- 8 “scoops” watermelon
- 2 cups fresh blueberries
- ½ cup vanilla low-fat yogurt
- ¼cup crunchy cereal nuggets

Peel bananas and cut in half crosswise, then cut each piece in half lengthwise. For each serving, lay 2 banana pieces against the sides of a shallow dish. Place a watermelon “scoop” at each end of the dish. Fill the center space with the blueberries. Stir yogurt until smooth, spoon over the watermelon ‘scoops.’ Sprinkle with cereal nuggets.

Each serving of this recipe provides 2 fruit servings.

Nutrition Information Per Servings: 186 Calories, 1 g Fat, 1 mg Cholesterol, 66 mg Sodium, 44 g Carbohydrate, 4 g Protein